MATRIMONIAL DISCOURSE IN THE SELECT INDIAN ENGLISH NOVELS : A CRITICAL STUDY

A Ph. D Synopsis

Submitted to

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Dnyanteerth, Vishnupuri, Nanded

For The Registration of the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH

Under The Faculty of Arts

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May 2019

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Introduction

Literature has been an instrument to stimulate human emotion and sensibilities over the centuries. It makes us delight, laugh and enlighten us by telling the truth about the society. It explores social value system, nature, attitude and all the aspects of life. Literature doesn't belong to a place or person, it is universal. In modern Indian society there are a number of issues which is have found space in literature. Literature is considered to be the reflection of the contemporary society. As literature is universal in the same way the themes of marriage and family are also universal. Technically matrimony is not simply marriage; it refers to more to the relationship between husband and wife than to the ceremony or the state of marriage.

Traditional society, particularly in India matrimonial discourse plays a significant role in construction of male as well as female identity. The role of marriage, husband, wife and children are considered significant in every person's life. Traditional Indian societies consider marriage as the most essential part of a person's life. A person is considered deficient and incomplete if he or she does marry at the so-called right age of marriage. Marriage in India is believed to be a sacred institution and also mandatory at least for every male and female. Therefore marriage is regarded as the social insurance for both men and women.

In general sense Discourse means communication in speech or writing, but the term 'discourse' has become common currency in a variety of disciplines: critical theory, sociology, linguistics, philosophy, social psychology and many other fields, so much so that it is frequently left undefined , as if its usage was simply common knowledge. It is used widely in analyzing literary and non-literary texts. As discourses are social cognitions, socially specific ways of knowing social practices, they can be, and are, used as resources for representing social practices in text. Thus, a discourse is not a disembodied collection of statements, but grouping of utterances or statements which are

enacted within social context, which are determined by that social context and which contribute to the way that social context continues it's existence

Novels about marriage are clearly not just stories about live-in, sometimes not even stories about love. Marriage as a social institution, marriage as a form of power- these are the heart story here. Going back in the past, we find a great tradition of writers who contributed a lot to Indian Writing in English. There are masters of words like Rabindranath Tagore, R. K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Bharati Mukherjee, Arundhati Roy, Shashi Deshpande, Shobha De, Anita Desai, Vikram Seth, Kiran Desai, ArvindAdiga, ChetanBhagat, Mahashweta Devi, V.S. Naipol, YashodharaLal, ShobhanaMahadevan, ManjuKapur,etc. These are some representative examples of the people who portrayed contemporary matrimonial issues in their works. The present study aims to focus light on the select Indian English novels. These novels are selected from different novelists having different backgrounds And attempt will we made to know what made these people write novel and the usefulness for all the society.

Significance of the study

As a form of literature novel has its own features. It has philosophical values and one of the most instructive form in which the understanding of contemporary society comes before us . Reading novels and stories allow us to gain access to deeply imagined lives other than our own. Experiencing moral situations enriches the pool of experience from which we make decisions. Great novels also have the complexity to strengthen our moral muscles and it also helps to understand other people's perspectives such as family and matrimonial issues. In the world of literature, we find that society and marriages are the recurrent themes for writing novels since the ages.

The present study will make the comparison between the arranged marriage and the love marriage. Nowadays marriages are easily broken due to globalization, modernity, high expectations, challenges, irresponsibility, economic crisis, etc. Present study will helps to solve problems regarding matrimonial issues like divorce, exploitation of women, status of husband and wife and challenges to the marriage institution.

The proposed research work entitled Matrimonial Discourse in the select Indian English Novels : A Critical Study

will prove significant and innovative in understanding Indian rituals, tradition, culture, morality and ethics. It will also focus on the freedom and rights given to wife and husband and all Indians to express their views, experiences, and emotions, opinions etc. The present research will enhance the understanding of common people, those who are interested in reading such novels based on the matrimonial issues.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

In order to do a critical study of the Matrimonial Discourse, the research shall attempt to:

- To make a critical analysis of the select novels as a matrimonial discourse.
- To interpret the thoughts, feelings and messages given in the texts by authors.
- To judge critically the mentality and expectations of all the couples in the select novels.
- The present research aims at an-in-depth inquiry of the status of wife and husband in the contemporary Indian society.
- To study the significance of marriage institution.
- To study the impact of matrimonial discourse in the formation of the identity of men and women in Indian society.
- To study the changes in weddings in the changing societies in the contemporary India.
- To pursue the representation of matrimonial discourse in the contemporary fiction.

Hypothesis:

The present research is based on the following hypothesis:

- Marriage Institution has been very strong in Indian society since the ages, and it has acquired a very strong position in society
- Indian literature has been dealing with the matrimonial system through various literary works.
- The contemporary Indian English novels mainly deals with the long age marriage system in India.
- The present research work deals with some of the important contemporary Indian English novels that represents Indian matrimonial issues.
- The stories and other experiences of these novelists reflected in the texts will guide to readers for self introspection as well as self examination
- .The selected novels are the representative of their time, culture, matrimonial system, tradition, impressions, and values.

Scope and Limitations of the study:

The present research work Matrimonial Discourse in the Select Indian English Novels : A Critical Study will see these novels as a genre of literature, but the study would have a certain limitations. It is interpretative and critical in nature. Analysis of these novels for the implementation at the present times will be done. It has an adequate scope to examine the thoughts , feelings and psychology of the protagonists of all the novels. It is challenging to come down to the specific generalization about the different texts by respective authors having diverse background. Hence the human emotions, feelings, ambitions, temperaments, and feelings are the same everywhere, so scope for analysis, comparison is vast, The present research mainly depends on the availability of the study material in the library, and moreover it relies on the findings of matrimonial perspectives in the select texts. However, it would be a limited study of select works. As far as proposed research is concerned, there are many masterpieces of Indian English novels but for the comfort of the present study the following novels have been selected.

1. *2 Staes: The Story of My Marriage*, by ChetanBhagat(2009).

2. *Two Fates: The Story of My Divorce* by Judy Balan (2011).

3. *Second Thoughts* by Shobha De (1996).

4. *Home* by ManjuKapur (2007).

5. *Just Married, Please Excuse:* Opposite Attract-Trouble by YashodharaLal (2012).

6. *A Suitable Boy* by Vikram Seth (1993).

7. *A Marriage Knot: a tangled Love Story* by ShobanaMahadevan (2019).

A Review of the Selected Novels

1. *2 States*:*The Story of My Marriage* by ChetanBhagat (2009).

The name of ChetanBhagat outshines among the 21st century fiction writers. He is considered as the voice of the young generation of this age. His novels deals with the contemporary Indian society and marriage. 2 States is the fourth novel of ChetanBhagat. The novel is about a couple coming from two different states in India, who face hardship in convincing their parents to approve their marriage. The novel is partly autobiographical. The story begins in the IIM Ahmadabad mess hall where Krish, a Punjabi boy from Delhi sights a beautiful girl Ananya a Tamilian from Chennai. They soon become friends within few days. Both graduated and get jobs with serious for their wedding.krish first convinces Ananya's father and then her mother. With Ananya's parents convinced the couple then to convince Krish's mother but Krish's relatives doesn't want Krish to get married a Tamilian.Through the novel Bhagat explores the story of marriage of the young couple and how they succeeded in convincing both their parents.

2. *Two Fates: The Story of My Divorce* by Judy Balan (2011).

Judy Balan is mainly concerned with the changing trends in the contemporary Indian society. The novel Two Fates is primarily deals with the matrimonial issues, but Balan parodied ChetanBhagat's 2States:The Story of My Marriage. The novel has autobiographical elements but Judy herself declared that this is a simply a story for the novel. The parody however, is only a sub-plot and not the focus of the novel. The novel

has it's own characters and storyline. The plot of the book revolves around the marriage of a cute couple, Deepika Sunder (a Tamilian girl) and a handsome Punjabi boy RishabKhanna,who after a lot of trials and tribulations convince their parents and get married, and within a couple of years think of getting divorced! On mutual ground of course! This is the changing trends in present times. The novel explores the theme of marriage. The novel is also the best example of realistic fiction.

3. *Second Thoughts* by Shobha De (1996)

Shobha De is one of the great novelists in the present times. Her novels explores the social reality in the contemporary Indian society. Her novels also exposes the moral and spiritual breakdown of the modern marriage system and marital relationship. The novel Second Thoughts has a certain merit and that merit lies in De's ability to dissect the hollowness and hypocrisy in most Indian marriage; the male ego, the dutiful wife, the overbearing mother-in-law, the social pretence and the public facades.

Second Thoughts (1996) is the seventh novel of Shobha De. The novel explores the agony of Maya, the protagonist of the novel. Maya is the representative of the middle class Indian society and the suffering of so many married women due to traditional marriage system. The novel reflects the hollowness of Indian marriage. Maya, a middle class Bengali girl in Calcutta, wanted to move to Mumbai to escape her dull life. But she found herself trapped by an arrange marriage to Rajan who was highly conservative and completely indifferent to her desires. At this time she was attracted by a charming college going boy named Nikhil. Maya neglected by her husband and exploited and deceived by her lover, remained silent and sufferer.

4.*Home* by ManjuKapur (2006)

ManjuKapur is a well known contemporary Indian novelist, who has established herself with her *Difficult Daughters* (1998), which won her prestigious Commonwealth Writers Prize in 1998. Her books have been translated into many languages both in India and outside. Her novels are mainly concerned with matrimonial issues. Home (2006) is the third novel of ManjuKapur, which deals with the love marriage and arranged marriage.

However, Home mainly depicts the growth of Sona's daughter Nisha as an individual identity. She is in love with Suresh, her Paswan boyfriend. The process of marriage is hastened by her family and Nisha becomes the first woman from the BanwariLal family to be advertised for marriage. Then she married to Arvind. The novel chiefly reveals the domination of the marriage institution and it is the best example of matrimonial discourse.

5. *Just Married, Please Excuse:Opposite Attract- Trouble* by YashodharaLal (2012)

Just Married, Please Excuse is the debut novel of YashodharaLal. Lal is an emerging Indian novelist, who knew the Indian matrimonial issues and Indian society as well. Just Married, Please Excuse is a hilarious account of marriage. It is a story that deals with the good and the bad, the ups and downs, the expected and unexpected, the small things and big things - in short with 'marriage' and all that it entails. It is the story of a young married couple and their journey together as they go through the ups and downs of life. Yashodhara and Vijay are the protagonists. They are much like modern day couple trying to juggle life responsibilities and love. In short the novel is an account of a fresh and honest take on marriage.

6. *A Suitable Boy* by Vikram Seth (1993)

Vikram Seth is another leading novelist and poet in recent times. He has written several novels and poetry books. He has received several awards such as Padmashri,SahityaAcademiAward,etc. The arranged marriage is the main theme of A Suitable Boy (1993). The novel is set in a newly post- Independence India and follows the story of four families over a period of eighteen months, and centers on MrsRupaMehra's efforts to arrange the marriage of her younger daughter Lata, to a "suitable boy". Lata is a 19-year-old University student who refuses to be influenced by her domineering mother or opinionated brother, Arun. Her story revolves around the choice she is forced to make between her suitors Kabir, Haresh, and Amit. Vikram Seth sets up the major issues of the cultural tradition of making arranged marriages for Indian children of the higher castes. Here also matrimonial discourse is the chief concern of the novel.

7. *A Marriage Knot: a Tangled Love Story* by ShobanaMahadevan (2019)

ShobanaMahadevan is another emerging Indian novelist. She is an engineer by profession but writer by passion. She had received the 100 Inspiring Authors of India Award in2018, from The Indian Awaz. A Marriage Knot is her second novel. The novel is about a young, simple, and smart girl with master's degree in finance. She has endured heartbreaking tragedy in her childhood and hopes the future would be more kind to her. But due to a strange turn of events, she ends up in a marriage of convenience with Arjun, an attractive adventurous entrepreneur. They both agree to be married for just a year. Their carefully laid plans shattered during the one year of marriage. Arjun discovers Neha is not as congenital and plains as he believed. But ends is happy. All the characters are very likeable and their thoughts relatable. The novel explores the changing trends in marriage institution.

Research Methodology

There are three aspects of methodology for this research work.

1) Data Sources

A) Primary Sources

The proposed study intends to interpret and evaluate the primary texts by these selected novels. The original novels in print by the authors are available in English.

B) Secondary Sources

- Books and similar Publications
- Articles and printed Periodicals
- Scholarly books and projects
- Electronic and online resources
- Web Sources
- E-books and E-libraries

- News channels and Newspaper

2) Methods and Techniques of collecting Data

The present research would be carried out systematically for doing a critical survey and the Library Research Method will be used. The researcher intends to visit different libraries and consult for collecting the ideas and the data of relevant texts and writers of these select texts. The research does not have involvement of any field work.

3) Methods and Techniques of Analyzing Data

The technique of analyzing data is an activity to find and arrange the data in a proper sequence by organizing the data into different categories. The qualitative method will be utilized for a critical survey of the selected novels.

Tentative Scheme of Chapterization

This research tentatively proposes to follow the chapter scheme given below

Chapter 1: Introduction: Marriage as a dominant subject in literature- its short history.

Chapter II: The Representation Of Matrimonial Discourse In The Select Indian English Novels

Chapter III:Status Of Husband And Wife In The Present Era

Chapter-IV: A comparative study of matrimony reflected in the select novels

Chapter- V:Conclusion

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